1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

852 (868) sitting down, milks a small quantity into the honē. This is his first initiation into the duty of milking, and it is that he may not commit mistakes on the very first day of his milking that the honē is previously filled almost to the brim. The boy takes the vessel filled with milk into his house, and pours some of the sacred fluid into all his household eating vessels—a sign that from that day he has taken up on himself the responsibility of supplying the family with milk. He also throws some milk in the faces of his parents and relatives. They receive it very kindly, and bless him, and request him to continue thus to milk the buffaloes, and bring plenty and prosperity to the house. After this, the boy enters the milk-house (hāgōttu), and places milk in his honē there. From this moment, and all through his life, he may enter into that room, and this is therefore considered a very important ceremony."

234 • 788 (784) (783) (824) A cow or buffalo, which has calved for the first time, has to be treated in a special manner. For three or five days it is not milked. A boy is then selected to milk it. He must not sleep on a mat, or wear a turban, and, instead of tying his cloth round his waist, must wear it loosely over his body. Meat is forbidden, and he must avoid, and not speak to polluting classes, such as Irulas and Kotas, and menstruating women. On the day appointed for milking the animal, the boy bathes, and proceeds to milk it into a new honē purified by smearing a paste of *Meliosma* (tūd) leaves and bark over it, and heating it over a fire. The milk is taken to a stream, where three cups are made of *Argyreia* (mīnige) leaves, into which a small quantity of the milk is placed. The cups are then put in the water. The remainder of the milk in the honē is also poured into the stream. In some places, especially where a Mādeswara temple is

782 788 (234)

782 close at hand, the milk is taken to the temple, and given
788 to the pūjāri. With a portion of the milk some plantain fruits are made into a pulp, and given to an Udaya, who
264 throws them into a stream. The boy is treated with some respect by his family during the period when he milks the animal, and is given food first. This he must eat off a plate made of *Argyreia*, or plantain leaves.

361 Besides the hāgōttu within the house, the Badagas have, at certain places, separate dairy-houses near a temple dedicated to Heththeswāmi, of which the one at Bairaganni (or Bērganni) appears to be the most im-
793 portant. The dairy pūjāri is here, like the Toda palol, a celibate. In 1905, he was a young lad, whom my
123 Brāhman assistant set forth to photograph. He was, however, met at a distance from the village by a headman, who assured him that he could not take the photograph without the sanction of fifteen villages. The pūjāri is not allowed to wander freely about the village, or talk to grown-up women. He cooks his own food within the temple grounds, and wears his cloth thrown loosely over his body. Once a year, on the occasion of a festival, he is presented with new cloths and turban, which alone he may wear. He must be a strict vege-
787 tarian. A desire to marry and abandon the priesthood is believed to be conveyed in dreams, or through one inspired. Before leaving the temple service, he must train his successor in the duties, and retires with the gains acquired by the sale of the products of the herd
778 and temple offerings. The village of Bairaganni is regarded as sacred, and possesses no holagudi (menstrual hut).

782 Bishop Whitehead adds that "buffaloes are given as offerings to the temple at Bairaganni, and become the property of the pūjāri, who milks them, and uses the

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

the houses. On that occasion some Badagas also do *pu:ja* to bring blessings upon agricultural implements and even school books.

Ka:rttige is followed by the month of Ma:rgaźi (December-January), the most inauspicious month of the Dravidian calendar. Some Badagas have now adopted the Tamilian practice of daily *pu:ja* throughout the month. Early each morning a group of men goes along every village street singing *bajan* songs about Shiva and Vishnu. Before this daily tour the women clean the houses, put auspicious markings on the ground outside their doorways and leave the doors open with a lamp burning inside until the *bajan* group has passed by. The many villages which have adopted this ritual conclude the unlucky month with a big communal feast.

In short, we find that there is some local variation in the form taken by the borrowed memorial ceremonies and festivals. They are not celebrated by all Badagas and those who do so show less enthusiasm for them than for native Badaga festivals. Furthermore, Badagas are much less enthusiastic about them than are the Tamilians and Kanarese now living in the Nilgiris.

GROWTH OF LINGAYAT TIES WITH MYSORE

Before the twentieth century those Badagas who were Lingayats were mostly illiterate and knew little about their religion as it was practised in the Mysore homeland. Perhaps once or twice a year a Lingayat *guru* would wander up into the Nilgiris from nearby Aṅgala or Nanjangud, selling *liṅgas* and performing family ceremonies (Harkness, 1832, 137); whatever he taught about the Lingayat faith would have been transmitted by word of mouth. In this century, in contrast, Badaga Lingayats are literate, and some are avid readers of books on Lingayat philosophy. Cheap bus transport has also enabled them to visit the Nanjangud temple and other places of pilgrimage easily and so to meet well-informed monks and priests in the towns of Mysore State.

One significant fruit of this increased contact has been a number of marriages between Badaga Lingayat men and Kanarese Lingayat girls; even a few of the conservative Wodeas have taken this step. However, the move for marital ties with Mysorę has not found ready acceptance among most Badaga Lingayats, even though Kanarese brides usually bring a substantial dowry with them. For several decades this matter has been the subject

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

Badagas in more matters than marketing. They are now able to go to town frequently—typically once a week—and their children can attend high school or even college without losing much contact with the home. (Ootacamund has two colleges and Coonoor another, all three affiliated with Madras University.) Literacy and newspapers in Tamil have spread, too, in part because of the easy transportation system. The literacy rate is now seemingly higher in the rural Nilgiri Plateau than in Madras City: in 1963, 78% of adult Badaga males and 52% of females were literate, while in 1961 70% of Madras City males and 48% of females were literate.[12] Even old Badagas are often quite familiar with daily news stories, weather forecasts and even some political predictions (cf. Hockings, 1965 a, *passim*).

The cheap railway and bus services have made visits to the great pilgrimage centres of South India possible for thousands: the famous temples at Cape Comorin, Madurai, Palni, Tirupati and Tanjore now receive Badagas almost daily. Nor must we overlook the business trip: increasingly farmers as well as traders find it worth visiting cities when they have a harvest to sell or bulk supplies to purchase.

The modern cities and great pilgrimage centres can have two different types of psychological effect: a city shows the Badaga visitor profusions of consumer goods, among them new household devices, radios, watches, bicycles and cameras, as well as interesting foods, cloths and ornaments; the pilgrimage centre, on the other hand, stresses ties with the mythical past of South India, with the gods represented in the temples, with priestly authority and with the grand history of the temples themselves. It is an important distinction: the man who goes to a distant temple may come home with his attention focussed on the past and on separation of the self from worldly matters, whereas the man coming from a business trip may be full of a desire to buy some implement he has seen or try out a new skill or save money so that his son may attend college in the city.[13] This distinction between the conservative and the modernizing effects of travel is to some extent paralleled in the choice between mythical and modern film themes or between religious and secular magazines. Not all contact with the cities necessarily introduces people to modern ways of life; not all who patronize radio, films or periodicals are drinking at a source of non-traditional knowledge, for though the media may be modern the villager discriminates in what he derives from them.

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

till morning but must be completed at every house, no matter how late the hour. If necessary the girl must even knock on doors and waken people. Everyone should bless her, as her own mother has already done, with a formula wishing her: "May you, my darling, soon receive a husband, bring forth a son, build your own house and live happy" (Natesa Sastri 1892: 761; Francis 1908: 131). From this time onward the girl is really a full-fledged member of the village community. There is a rule, no longer followed, that she should now bow down to any visitor from another hamlet, whether a man or woman. More importantly she is now recognized as being ready for marriage. Traditionally her forehead would be tattooed a few days later, leaving a visible sign of her marriageability (Natesa Sastri 1892: 760; Francis 1908: 131).

3.13. The menstrual hut (*holagudi*—"pollution place") was an important institution in the lives of adult women. They were customarily secluded there for a period of five to seven days (Thurston 1909: 103; "Miles" 1933: 74). If a woman discovered her condition before washing in the morning, that day would be considered the *third* of seven days of pollution. To be more exact: in calculating those days, the second day of observable menstruation is counted as the third; but if the onset is noticed before sunrise then that same day is already counted as the nominal third day. This habit of mind is expressed in the proverb: "If dying today, it will be three days by tomorrow." Thus the entire menstrual period would cover five or six days, and not seven as informants may assert. It was the custom that on the real third day of her five secluded days a woman would bathe in cold water using bark of pellitory as soap. On the fourth day she was to repeat this bath, but could then put on a change of clothing, leave the hut, and spend part of the night on her own veranda. After cooking and eating her evening meal there she would bathe again and could then enter the outer, less sacred room of the house. Early next morning the spot where she slept was cleaned, and the woman bathed in the stream. Then she would return home, eat her meals in the outer room, and remain there until next morning, the sixth actual day, when the pollution period would terminate. During the entire period no one may touch a menstruating woman. Should a child nonetheless do so he must be washed to remove the pollution before he comes into contact with anyone else.

It was customary for women to use a kind of sanitary pad in the menstrual hut, made out of shredded bark and leaves ("Miles"

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

nine or 15 days she might begin to work in the house again (Jagor 1876: 199). Earlier yet, for her first birth, a woman would stay in the pollution hut until the next waning of the moon. In later confinements she would remain in the hut for only three days (Birch 1838: 104). The mother of twins, even if poor, should however stay at home looking after them for at least three months, without doing any outside work.

"A girl who has delivered is a good sight; a field with good crops is a good sight," according to one proverb. Within a month of the birth, on an auspicious day, mother and child return to her husband's house. The party must number (including both of them) at least five persons, and must be of an odd number unless it exceeds 21.

> On arrival there, the infant is placed near the feet of an old man standing by a lamp within the milk-house. Placing his right hand over the head of the infant, the old man blesses it, and a feast is held, before the commencement of which two cups, one containing milk, and the other cooked rice, are produced. All the relations take up a little of the rice and milk, and touch the tongue of the baby with them. (Thurston 1909:109)

If a woman becomes pregnant for the twentieth time by the same husband (a previous marriage does not count), then, whether all the offspring are living or not, the couple go right through the wedding and seventh-month-of-pregnancy ceremonies again. These are performed on a lavish scale, even if the husband has to borrow substantially.

The Form and Sex of the Child

4.14. A proverb asks, "If a mother gives birth to a male child, will the father object to it?" Obviously he will not, since it is a blessing to the family (Verghese 1963: 420). The same idea is also expressed thus: "By delivering a son she is like a prima donna standing on a vantage point and calling out;" or "The man who has begotten a son and the man who has planted a coconut [tree] will not spoil." Another saying puts it quite succinctly: "A strong boy, a weak girl;" and yet another emphasizes that girl babies are not much wanted: "Even though you repeatedly tell her, she is

5 CHILD CARE

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"Pacifying the children is no less of a job than digesting the raw flesh of an animal."
(Proverb)

Feeding the Infant

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5.1. In Chapter 4 I have described the actions which immediately follow an infant's arrival in the world. There we saw how the newborn child sucks his mother's breast for the first time, and then swallows a small piece of bezoar. This is only one of several substances that he may be offered in the first few days of life. It has been reported that another buffalo product used to be given a day or two after birth, but its identity is uncertain; some identify it with bezoar, others with asafoetida, which is in fact a resinous vegetable substance. After a few days, when the child's stool is not yellow, some burnt rhizome of the sweet flag is also fed to the baby, mixed with mother's (Jagor 1876: 199). Somewhat later in life children were sometimes taken on pilgrimage to the temple at Ka:ramaḍai, near the eastern foot of the Nilgiris, where they were fed a particularly unsavoury medicinal foodstuff. Here during the annual festival for the goddess Ma:riamma mendicants were given consecrated pieces of banana mixed with crude sugar. These they chewed a little, then spat into the hands or mouths of devotees, who ate this or fed it to their children because it was believed to cure all diseases ("Miles" 1933: 267).

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5.2. Mother's milk is the best food for a baby, better than any animal's milk. The child should be weaned at one year, particularly as the mother may be pregnant again by then. Some mothers naturally have little milk; with others the flow of milk may stop if

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4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

fully with the partner. Some non-vegetarians do make a medicine for infertility from the eye of the crow-pheasant (*Centropus sinensis parroti*).

6.63. Badagas rarely offer *pu:ja* at a local temple nowadays in order to obtain children, but in the last century they often did so. Worship of the phallic *linga* symbol associated with Siva was considered very efficacious, particularly in those rare cases where it happened to be a prehistoric axe-head that had "miraculously appeared" in a field during ploughing. The Badaga ancestress deity Hette was also commonly resorted to for the same reason (Jagor 1876 : 199-200). Today it is usual for a couple with no children to make a pilgrimage to some important temple in the South Indian plains, where they make oaths to various gods, promising them goats, coconuts or idol ornaments once they have satisfied the supplicants' need for a child. It is no light matter for a man in an undivided joint family to take such an oath, because of the rules that it entails: in order to fulfil his promise after the birth of a child, the man must consult his family as to when that can be done. The problem is that (*a*) these oaths are normally fulfilled after a birth, but only on a festival day if they were taken in a *Badaga* temple: (*b*) they must not be fulfilled while *any* woman in the joint family is pregnant ; and yet (*c*) they must be fulfiled within twelve years of the requested birth. If this last rule is disregarded the offended god may visit another misfortune on the family; and so, even in a nuclear family, a man will try to discharge his obligation to the deity well before the twelve years following the birth, just in case his wife should happen to be pregnant again during the festivals of that final year. A further rule (*d*) is that if a man has promised the hair of his child to a deity, and if he waits for several years to make good his promise, then he must at the same time

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

842 782 offer up the hair of all subsequent children that may have been born to him in the interim.

6.64. Early in the nineteenth century the Abbé 842 782 786 839 J. A. Dubois, understandably aghast at what he had learnt, noted that women yearning for children prostituted themselves to anyone at temple festivals in the plains near the foot of the Nilgiri Hills. "Barren women, in the hope that they will cease to be so, visit them after binding themselves by a vow to grant their favours to a fixed number of libertines" (Dubois 1906 : 596). He also wrote 842 788 about the temple at Nanjangud, near Mysore, which is in the centre of the Badagas' ancient homeland and is still much visited by them:

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> Offerings and prayers are not the only ceremonies which have to be gone through. On leaving the temple the woman, accompanied by her husband, has to go to a place where all the pilgrims are accustomed to resort to answer the calls of nature. There the husband and the wife collect with their hands a certain quantity of ordure and form it into a small pyramid, which they are careful to mark with a sign that will enable them to recognize it. Then they go to the neighbouring tank and mix in the hollow of their hands the filth which has soiled their fingers. (But I will spare my readers the rest.) After having performed their ablutions they retire. Two or three days afterwards they visit their pyramid, and, still using their hands, turn the filthy mass over and over and examine it as carefully and as seriously as the Roman augurs scrutinized the entrails of sacrificed animals, in order to see if any insects have been engendered in it. In this case it would be a very good omen, showing that the woman would soon be pregnant. But if, after careful search, not even the smallest insect is visible, the poor couple,

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

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sad and discouraged, return home in the full conviction that the expenses they have been put to and the pains they have taken have been of no avail. (Dubois 1906 : 594-95)

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More recently it has also been reported that sterile women attended the popular festival of the goddess Ma:riamma at Ka:ramaḍai, near the eastern foot of the Nilgiris in Coimbatore District, to have intercourse with religious mendicants there in the hope of getting children. Such unpleasant procedures, resorted to by Badaga, Tamilian and Kanarese pilgrims alike, have long since ceased to occur, but childless couples still make vows at the Ka:ramaḍai festival "Miles" : (1933 267).

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6.65. A liquid medicine (details unrecorded) otherwise given to newly delivered mothers (cf. 4.11) is administered to a person who cannot urinate. This condition and the associated swollen bladder, caused by excess of "heat" in the body, are relieved by the medicine.

URETHRITIS (*sege*)

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Fevers

6.66. The Badagas like the English have a saying, "If you are suffering from a cold, take extra food; if suffering from a fever, take little food." There are different kinds of fever, and they can affect people of all ages, but one medicine can be taken for all kinds. The shoots and smaller leaves of the velvety patchouli and related species (*koḍaṅgu*) are ground up and the juice from them mixed with some salt. This is swallowed, and is said to be more effective than quinine. In the early nineteeth century opium was used as a prophylactic against fever (Price 1908: 224).

FEVER (*jara*)

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6.67. The Kurumbas knew of a now-forgotten twig or root which, when smelled fresh, dispelled fever. The present medicine of the Badagas makes use instead of the nest of the red-headed fantail warbler

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968 beside a stream somewhere. Some very small hamlets still have nothing more
778 like a temple than such an object; but usually they will erect at least a small shed
968 over the image. The average-sized hamlet (of perhaps 80-100 households) has four
[621] or five built temples, as well as various minor shrines of the kind just described.
In addition there is normally a large temple common to the whole "village". Three
temples in the Nilgiris (at Melur, Bokkapur and Bergani) attract devotees from all
794 over the District for their annual festivals (Francis 1908: 316-317, 339-340). The
[793] larger temples all have Haruva or Gauda priests, and worship is done regularly
once a day or once a week. Smaller temples may only be used once or twice a
793 year, and then at a particular festival. While priests are appointed from among
[795] the villagers, or may sometimes be hereditary roles in certain families, they
officiate only in their own hamlet or "village", and there is no kind of wider church-
1.
788 like organization to Badaga Śaivism. For the past century, however, Badagas have
been making pilgrimages to various of the major South Indian temple centers, the
[795] closest being Pēṟūr, near Coimbatore, Nanjangud, near Mysore, and Palni. There
has thus been contact in recent times with the "great tradition" and its philosophi-
cal literature; and this has had the effect of bringing Badaga religious practices
closer to those of the plainsmen. This topic will be considered later in the thesis
(cf. Chapter VII).

779 Lingayatism, otherwise known as Vīraśaivism, is one of the more
important and most recent schools to develop in Śaivite philosophy. The origin
of the present Lingayat philosophical system, qua system, can be traced quite
reliably to ca. 1160 A.D. at the Central Indian city of Kalyana, where it was
formulated by a saint named Basava. After him came many followers and com-

177 796 For the past 40 years Dipāvali, and for the past 20 Kārtige, have been celebrated in many Badaga hamlets. Both are annual festivals adopted from the culture of the Tamilnād plains. Dassara, which has always been the biggest annual celebration in Mysore City, has also been celebrated by Badagas for the past 25 years. All of these festivals are celebrated in a very attenuated form in the Badaga hamlets. 796 Dipāvali, the day on which Kriśna destroyed the demon Narakasura, is given little importance by the Badagas, for they perform no rituals at this time. A minority of the people wear new dresses on this date; but otherwise they do not perform so much as a puja in Kriśna's honor. Kārtige extends over two days in November or December, but only the first of these, dedicated to Śiva, assumes any importance. All the houses carry lights on that day and throughout the following night; but on the second day, dedicated to Viśnu, very few lights remain burning. During the first evening the village priest does a puja in the temple, and most of the villagers attend this ceremony. Dassara, like Kārtige and Dipāvali, is celebrated on a small scale when compared with the main indigenous Badaga festivals (at sowing and harvest-time) (782) (cf. Karl 1945: 12-20). Although Dassara is universally supposed to last for ten days, it is only on the evening of the ninth that the Badagas do any kind of celebration and this is a simple puja done to images or lithographs of gods that are kept in the houses. Some Badagas do an additional puja on this occasion to bring blessings upon agricultural implements, and even on school books.

177 788 Kārtige is followed by the month of Mārgaṣi (December to January), which is the most inauspicious month in the Dravidian calendar. During the past 30 or 40 years, therefore, some Badagas have adopted the Tamilian practice of doing a puja every day of that month. Early each morning a group of men goes along every street 788 (956) of their hamlet singing bhajan songs about the gods Śiva and Viśnu. Before the daily

tour of the singers, the women clean out the houses, place auspicious markings outside the doorways, and leave the doors open with a lamp burning inside until the bhajan group has passed by. Many hamlets have adopted this practice. They conclude the unlucky month by holding a big communal feast attended by the entire hamlet.

In summary, whether we consider the organization of Kārtige, Mārgaṭi, Dipāvali or Dassara, we find that the borrowed festival is not celebrated by the entire Badaga population, there is some local variation in the way in which it is celebrated, those who do celebrate the festival still show much less enthusiasm for it than for native Badaga festivals; and finally, Badagas show much less enthusiasm for these festivals than do the Tamilians and Mysoreans now living in the Nilgiris.

4) Since 1913 important developments have occurred in the Badaga Christian community. From the earliest years of the present century, according to the missionary reports, the Christian community has been recognized by the Badagas as a distinct caste inferior to Hindu Badagas but superior to Kotas, and rigid patterns for interaction between the Christians and Hindus have been formalized. During the period 1913-1947 the Hindu Badagas, like the Christians before them, became increasingly dependent on the economy and the labor market which was ultimately controlled by the British. As a result of this the former acts of violence toward Badaga Christians ceased: as many Hindu Badagas now found it desirable to maintain outwardly friendly attitudes towards the British, they could not simultaneously be openly antagonistic toward the religion of the British.

After the Christians had become a separate social group, Roman Catholic priests became active -- mainly in converting Protestant Badagas -- and thereby split the Christians into two culturally very similar but structurally opposed groups, each maintaining a self-righteous and antagonistic attitude not only toward the other

433 (648) employing Kasuvas and exploiting the grazing potentials offered by tropical savanna woodlands, bamboo thickets, thorny thickets, and related savannas of the Mysore Ditch.

234 778 (776) (782) (346) The Bergani dairy-temple center. A sacred buffalo herd is maintained at the Bergani dairy-temple center honoring the goddess Masthi Hethai. At the center there is a building with an inner dairy-temple, priest's quarters, and rooms to shelter buffalo calves (Plate III, A). Several buffalo-pens stand close by. Down slope there is another building where pilgrims may sleep. Inside it is a sacred

778 (782) (793) (788) room where an employed Chetti annually weaves new clothing for the goddess's image and the attendant priest. Food for hundreds of pilgrims who attend an annual festival is cooked in a nearby shed with aligned fireplaces.

234 778 (431) (648) Features inside the dairy-temple are identically related to the arrangement of features within Badaga row temples described in a later chapter. The dairy-temple center and a herd of over 70 buffaloes are supported through monetary gifts and buffaloes donated by devotees. Todas sometimes give buffaloes. Most gift buffaloes are garlanded and presented to the priest during a week preceding the festival honoring the goddess. The young priest, who may serve for a year or more, looks

234 778 793 after the sacred buffaloes and processes their milk inside the dairy-temple. He never returns to secular life during his term in office, and must give up the priesthood on Masthi Hethai's Monday if he starts dreaming about girls or wishes to get married. The youth milks sacred buffaloes in the morning and evening, takes buffaloes to and from

234 778 (793) (237) (372) (262) (562) (783) 793 (262) (431) 796 (188) (562) (293) (262) (784) (793) (241) (842) pasture on neighboring slopes, and processes milk into clarified butter. This, as the sacred clarified butter of the Badagas, is used in lamps within the dairy-temple and for ritual at Badaga festivals or temples. Any Badaga male may visit the Bergani dairy-temple and drink buttermilk given to him by the priest. Because women are polluting, no woman may enter the dairy-temple complex itself. However, women of nearby Bergani hamlet come daily to an established point at an uncontaminating distance from the dairy-temple and there receive buttermilk for household consumption. Buttermilk from processed sacred milk is also drunk by the priest. The priest never eats meat while in office and cooks his own vegetarian food. All grains, vegetables, and other foodstuffs needed by him are supplied by visitors or neighboring Bergani Badagas.

The festival honoring Masthi Hethai takes place on a Monday in mid-January. Badaga males from all over the Nilgiris come with their Hethai sticks to worship the goddess (Plate III, B). Women may also attend, but must remain an uncontaminating distance away from sacred places. Men and women wear new white clothing, must not bring anything made with leather, and eat no meat during the festival. At the festival's climax, two entranced priests believed to be possessed by Masthi Hethai predict crop yields in the coming main crop season (karbokan) and inform a few men that their wives will shortly conceive. Daily and festival rituals at Bergani are thus parts of a fertility cult related to the Badaga's economy and future prosperity.

234 361 Badaga hundis. The Badagas have for a long time used seasonal